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## **BOSTON AREA CONSUMER PRICES ROSE 0.3 PERCENT IN SEPTEMBER; UP 4.6 PERCENT OVER THE YEAR**

The Consumer Price Index For All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in the Boston metropolitan area was up 0.3 percent for the two months ended September 2001, according to Denis M. McSweeney, Regional Commissioner of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. This follows a 0.6 percent rise during the previous two-month period ended in July 2001. The all items index rose largely due to increases within housing, a seasonal rise in apparel, and an increase in education and communication. For the year ended September 2001, the CPI-U for Boston rose 4.6 percent and core inflation, as measured by the all items less food and energy index, was also up 4.6 percent.

For the two months ended September 2001, housing rose 0.7 percent, largely due to higher costs within shelter which more than offset declines in utility (piped) gas and fuel oil. The apparel category rose 4.0 percent due to the seasonal introduction of fall clothing lines. Education and communication posted a 2.0 percent increase due to higher costs for tuition, other school fees, and childcare. Moderating the rise in the all items index, transportation declined 1.9 percent, the result of a sharp 9.3 percent drop in the price of gasoline. Among the remaining major expenditure categories, other goods and services increased 1.1 percent and medical care edged up 0.1 percent. Posting declines, recreation fell 0.8 percent and food and beverages decreased 0.2 percent.

For the year ended September 2001, the Boston CPI-U rose 4.6 percent, largely due to an increase in the housing index. A 7.3 percent rise in shelter combined with increases in both electricity and utility natural gas service, up 26.8 and 21.9 percent, respectively, led to a 7.4 percent rise in housing. Food and beverages increased 3.7 percent, the result of higher prices at grocery stores and restaurants. Among the remaining categories over the year, other goods and services was up 4.7 percent and medical care rose 4.5 percent. Education and communication and apparel each recorded a 3.9 percent increase. The recreation category edged up 0.8 percent. Posting the only decline over the year, transportation fell 1.7 percent due to an 11.4 percent decline in the price of gasoline.

In September, the Boston CPI-U on the 1982-84 base was 192.7. By this gauge, the selected market basket of goods and services which cost area consumers an average of \$10.00 during the 1982-84 reference period, would now cost \$19.27. The purchasing power of the dollar for the Boston area in 1982-84 dollars was 51.9 cents. In September, the CPI-W (Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers), at 192.0, rose 0.4 percent since July 2001 and increased 4.8 percent over the year.

The Boston Consumer Price Index for November will be released on Friday, December 14, 2001 at 8:30 AM. Copies of this press release may be accessed 24 hours per day by using the BLS Fax-On-Demand service at (617) 565-9167. Please request fax code **9110**.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods  
Boston-Brockton-Nashua, MA-NH-ME-CT (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	July 2001	Aug. 2001	Sep. 2001	Sep. 2000	July 2001	Aug. 2001
Expenditure category						
All items .....	192.1	-	192.7	4.6	0.3	-
All items (1967=100) .....	558.3	-	560.0	-	-	-
Food and beverages .....	183.1	-	182.8	3.7	-.2	-
Food .....	184.2	-	183.9	4.1	-.2	-
Food at home .....	176.4	177.3	176.1	3.7	-.2	-0.7
Food away from home .....	197.4	-	197.2	4.7	-.1	-
Alcoholic beverages .....	174.8	-	173.9	-.2	-.5	-
Housing .....	191.6	-	192.9	7.4	.7	-
Shelter .....	225.0	227.6	227.4	7.3	1.1	-.1
Rent of primary residence (1).....	219.2	220.9	222.3	7.9	1.4	.6
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence (1) (2) .....	231.5	233.2	234.3	8.2	1.2	.5
Fuels and utilities .....	154.7	-	151.4	15.1	-2.1	-
Fuels .....	135.7	135.3	132.1	16.6	-2.7	-2.4
Gas (piped) and electricity (1).....	163.9	163.9	159.5	24.8	-2.7	-2.7
Electricity (1).....	164.3	164.3	164.3	26.8	.0	.0
Utility natural gas service (1).....	160.1	160.1	149.7	21.9	-6.5	-6.5
Household furnishings and operations .....	124.6	-	125.9	1.5	1.0	-
Apparel .....	137.6	-	143.1	3.9	4.0	-
Transportation .....	154.1	-	151.1	-1.7	-1.9	-
Private transportation .....	151.9	-	148.8	-3.1	-2.0	-
Motor fuel .....	135.7	126.3	123.2	-11.4	-9.2	-2.5
Gasoline (all types) .....	134.1	124.7	121.6	-11.4	-9.3	-2.5
Gasoline, unleaded regular (3).....	131.2	122.3	119.1	-12.1	-9.2	-2.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (3) (4)....	138.0	127.6	124.5	-11.5	-9.8	-2.4
Gasoline, unleaded premium (3).....	135.1	125.8	123.3	-9.2	-8.7	-2.0
Medical care .....	368.6	-	369.0	4.5	.1	-
Recreation (5).....	105.9	-	105.1	.8	-.8	-
Education and communication (5).....	105.8	-	107.9	3.9	2.0	-
Other goods and services .....	288.1	-	291.2	4.7	1.1	-
Commodity and service group						
All items .....	192.1	-	192.7	4.6	0.3	-
Commodities .....	152.5	-	151.8	.6	-.5	-
Commodities less food and beverages .....	135.2	-	134.3	-1.3	-.7	-
Nondurables less food and beverages .....	147.0	-	146.0	-.9	-.7	-
Durables .....	122.9	-	122.2	-1.8	-.6	-
Services .....	228.7	-	230.3	6.8	.7	-
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care .....	184.2	-	184.8	4.5	.3	-
All items less shelter .....	181.1	-	180.8	3.0	-.2	-
Commodities less food .....	136.8	-	136.0	-1.2	-.6	-
Nondurables .....	164.4	-	163.7	1.3	-.4	-
Nondurables less food .....	148.4	-	147.4	-.9	-.7	-
Services less rent of shelter (2) .....	241.3	-	242.0	6.2	.3	-
Services less medical care services .....	217.3	-	218.9	7.0	.7	-
Energy .....	135.0	131.3	128.2	5.0	-5.0	-2.4
All items less energy .....	200.9	-	202.4	4.5	.7	-
All items less food and energy .....	204.9	-	206.7	4.6	.9	-

1 This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series converted to a geometric means estimator in January, 1999.

2 Index is on a November 1982=100 base.

3 Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

4 Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

5 Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.

Regions defined as the four Census regions. See map in technical notes.